

## **Frequently Asked Questions: National Coastal Management Performance Measurement System (NCMPMS)**

The National Coastal Management Performance Measurement System (NCMPMS) serves as a mechanism for quantifying the national impact of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) by tracking indicators of the effectiveness of the National Coastal Management Program (NCMP) and National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS). The NCMPMS consists of performance indicators to track how well the NCMP and NERRS are achieving CZMA objectives and contextual indicators to track environmental and socioeconomic factors influencing program actions.

The following FAQs pertain only to the NCMP component of the NCMPMS, and are designed to answer commonly asked questions for state coastal management programs:

### **1. What is the status of the NCMPMS?**

OCRM and its partners have been working for three years to develop the NCMPMS. In 2002, the H. John Heinz Center developed a framework, which included six categories based on CZMA Section 303 objectives, to guide the development of performance indicators for the coastal management programs. In 2003, a federal-state workgroup composed of representatives from OCRM and eight coastal management programs developed a draft list of performance indicators based on the Heinz Center categories. In 2004, seven coastal management programs volunteered for a year-long pilot project to determine the usefulness and feasibility of the draft indicators. The pilot phase identified a set of relevant and feasible indicators, which will begin to be implemented by all coastal management programs in 2005.

### **2. What are the performance indicators, and who will collect them?**

State coastal management programs will collect data for the majority of the performance indicators. Indicators denoted with a (N) will be collected by NOAA. The performance indicators are organized into six categories related to CZMA Section 303 objectives: public access, coastal habitats, coastal hazards, coastal water quality, coastal community development and coastal dependent uses, and government coordination and decision-making. Please [click here](#) for the list of performance indicators.

### **3. What are the contextual indicators, and who will collect them?**

Contextual indicators were developed to identify socio-economic and environmental trends that influence and affect coastal management needs and priorities at both the state and national scale. NOAA will collect data for majority of the contextual indicators. Indicators denoted with a (S) will need to be collected by the state coastal management programs. Please [click here](#) for the list of contextual indicators.

### **4. What can I expect in the next year?**

All CZM programs will be asked to work on two new indicator categories per year for three years. For each phase, it is envisioned that CZM programs will identify data sources, establish a standard process to collect indicator data, and report indicator data annually. All indicators would then be populated with one to three years of data by year three, when the NCMPMS triennial report is due to Congress. The proposed implementation schedule is as follows:

Phase 1 – Public access; Government coordination & decision-making

Phase 2 – Coastal habitats; Coastal water quality (plus Phase I indicators)

Phase 3 – Coastal hazards; Coastal dependent uses & community development (plus Phase 1 & 2 indicators)

Programs will be asked to begin collecting Phase 1 indicator data during the FY 2005 year. OCRM recognizes that many programs have already developed their FY 2005 workplan without setting aside funds specifically to implement the NCMPMS. OCRM will be as flexible as possible in assisting

states that need to reprogram and amend their award to incorporate additional tasks associated with the NCMPMS. States may use section 306 or 309 funds to undertake necessary work to gather, analyze, or report on indicators. States are encouraged to evaluate whether a separate task is necessary to complete Phase 1, or if implementation activities can be incorporated into an existing task under either section 306 or 309. As you begin planning for the FY 2006 award, please consider financial needs to continue to implement the NCMPMS.

**5. What if the performance indicators don't apply to my program?**

All indicators may not be applicable to all CZM programs due to differing program structures and/or coastal resources. For example, the NCMPMS includes indicators to track progress in managing coral reef habitat, which only occurs in a few coastal states and territories. For those indicators not applicable to your program, you will be able to reply "n/a." However, programs are encouraged to develop and report similar applicable indicators. This will allow OCRM to communicate your story and inform the direction of how the national indicators evolve.

**6. What if the national performance indicators do not provide me with the types of information I need for management?**

The NCMPMS may not provide the full range of indicators needed for management of your program activities at the state level. If the national indicators do not provide adequate information, or the necessary type of information, OCRM encourages and will support your program in developing and implementing additional performance indicators specific to your program.

**7. How will I report this information to OCRM? Will it replace, or be a part of performance reports?**

OCRM is developing a reporting system that minimizes additional requirements and provides a simple, uniform approach to collect annual indicator data. Our goal is to provide a user-friendly interface through which data can be submitted into a national performance measurement database. As performance indicators become integrated into coastal programs, it is anticipated that performance reports will include some performance indicator information. OCRM envisions that indicators for the category of Government Coordination and Decision-Making will replace the current Section B of the performance report. Submission of indicator data may also involve an electronic reporting system utilizing the Internet. As the federal government moves towards streamlining through electronic grant applications and performance reporting, OCRM will ensure a compatible reporting system for indicators is maintained.

**8. Is additional funding available to start tracking performance indicators?**

No. OCRM encourages programs to use existing sources of data to populate the performance indicators. If the data is not available, OCRM will work with you to determine what data is needed and develop a process for attaining it. We recognize that if data is not currently available for certain indicators, it will take time to start collecting new data. We will continue to make funding requests to support the NCMPMS but recognize that, without tracking and reporting this information, we are at risk of having our current level of funding decrease.

**9. How will OCRM assist me with implementation?**

Implementation of the NCMPMS is a partnership between OCRM and coastal programs. OCRM will provide national guidance and individual assistance as needed to help coastal programs develop the data collection and reporting systems for their program. Assistance will include guidance materials, websites, and discussion forums, with new materials and methods being added based on your feedback and requests. In addition, OCRM will conduct training sessions at both regional and national CZM meetings. Because programs will work on the same categories each year, OCRM will be able to prepare targeted guidance and facilitate the sharing of common problems and solutions among coastal programs. In cases where national guidance is not sufficient, OCRM will provide individualize assistance whenever possible to assist programs with unique challenges. OCRM will

seek, where appropriate, technical or other assistance from other NOAA offices to assist states in gathering, analyzing, and reporting indicator data.

**10. How will OCRM use the performance indicator information?**

Performance indicator information will not be used to rank or score coastal management programs. Indicator information will be compiled across programs to form regional or national trends that will be used in communication materials and in informing the NCMP goal-setting activities. National or regional information will be distributed to Congress, OMB, federal agencies and regional organizations working on coastal management issues, and other parties of interest. The individual program information will be used to inform Section 309 Assessments, Section 312 evaluations, and annual grant negotiations when appropriate.

**11. How will the performance indicators relate to my 309 assessment and strategies?**

The CZMA Section 309 Program Enhancement Program was designed to encourage states to continually improve their approved programs to address coastal management priorities within eight enhancement areas. Although performance indicator categories are not identical to enhancement areas, the NCMPMS will inform the 309 assessment process at both the state and national level. The guidance for the 2006 to 2010 Section 309 cycle incorporated data collected for performance indicators with the assessment questions programs complete. OCRM will use Section 309 assessments and strategies to communicate and highlight the new indicators and where appropriate ask states to provide information on those indicators consistent with the phased implementation strategy. Section 309 funds may be used to gather, analyze, or report on indicators where gaps exist. OCRM will use the performance indicators during review and reporting of 309 assessments and strategies to associate trends identified through performance indicators with priorities identified through the 309 program. OCRM will continue to coordinate these efforts to create synergy where possible.

**12. How will the performance indicator information be used in 312 evaluations?**

Performance indicator information will not be used to score or rank programs. Performance indicator information will be used as one tool for informing and focusing the 312 evaluation process, along with the existing tools such as review of program materials and performance reports and site visits. For example, indicator trends may highlight a need to explore a certain issue with the program prior to or during the site visit.

**13. Is there a connection to CAMMP?**

CAMMP, or the Coastal and Marine Management Program, is designed to provide an on-line information system for coastal programs to manage requirements associated with coastal program grants. However, administration of reporting requirements for the NCMPMS will vary by state. For some programs, it may be a consistent portion of their grant workplan; but for others, the requirements may be met in other ways. Therefore, OCRM will develop a flexible reporting mechanism for the NCMPMS that does not change CZM grant application requirements. This reporting mechanism will be integrated with the CAMMP system and underlying national database.

**14. Why track performance measurements at the national level?**

Requests for NCMP performance measures have come directly from Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Other efforts drive the need to track performance measures across multiple NOAA offices and federal agencies. Drivers for the NCMPMS include:

- **Congressional requests** – FY 2003 Appropriations Conference Report directed NOAA to “begin designing and implementing performance measures to validate the continuation of the Coastal Zone Management Program.” OCRM delivered the [Report to Congress](#) on the National Coastal Management Performance Measurement System in September 2004 to inform Congress of the

development of NCMP and NERRS performance measures. OCRM also provides Congress with quarterly reports that update our progress in developing and implementing performance measures.

- **OMB PART results** – CZMA programs, including NCMP and NERRS, were evaluated by the OMB using the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) in 2004. The PART assessment found that “The CZMP and NERRS lack both long-term and annual performance measures. As a result, program effectiveness cannot be demonstrated.” In response, OMB made the following recommendation: “The CZMP and NERRS will work to complete development of outcome oriented performance measures.”
- **U.S. Ocean Action Plan** – The Ocean Action Plan calls for federal agencies to “periodically assess the state of the Nation’s oceans and coasts to measure the achievement of national ocean goals” and to “recommend assessments and analyses of Federal ocean resource management initiatives.”
- **NOAA initiatives** – Under the Government Performance and Results Act, NOAA and other federal agencies are developing and updating long-term outcome-oriented measures to quantify the impact of their programs. To support this effort, NOAA is developing a suite of outcome performance measures that reflect progress toward NOAA’s strategic goals. The NCMPS will help better represent coastal resource management in these efforts. The NCMPS will also provide performance measures and supporting data to demonstrate the contribution of NCMP toward these high level outcomes and improve visibility of the NCMP within the agency.

Overall, while there are many external drivers for the NCMPS and potential consequences if we do not move forward with this system, tracking performance measures will provide the federal-state partnership with valuable information for better internal management of the national program. The NCMPS will inform the direction of the national program and improve communication within the coastal management community.

#### **15. Who is the audience for the NCMPS?**

There are several key audiences for the NCMPS.

- Congress: The NCMPS will respond to Congressional requests for NOAA to “begin designing and implementing performance measures to validate the continuation of the Coastal Zone Management Program.”
- OMB: A national system of coastal management performance measures will respond to OMB’s recommendation that “The CZMP and NERRS will work to complete development of outcome oriented performance measures” after finding that “program effectiveness cannot be demonstrated” using the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART).
- NOAA- coastal management program partnership: The NCMPS will provide information on coastal management trends and the effectiveness of management strategies in influencing coastal resources, communities, and coastal decision-makers.

#### **16. What are the benefits of tracking performance measures at the national level?**

- Improved communication of the role of NCMP to key audiences, including improved understanding and visibility within NOAA, OMB, and Congress.
- Improved understanding of NCMP accomplishments and needs that will inform national program priorities.
- Strengthened state-federal partnership to identify coastal management needs at the state level and identify effective strategies for the partnership that can address those needs.

#### **17. Who do I contact with comments or questions?**

Please contact Laurie Rounds at [laurie.rounds@noaa.gov](mailto:laurie.rounds@noaa.gov).